

THE FORMIDABLE CHILIAN IRON-CLAD.

We give here a picture of the formidable Chilean battle-ship, the *Captain Prat*, which was launched about a year ago at Toulon, and is now fitting out in France. The *Captain Prat* is regarded as one of the strongest and most formidable war-ships now afloat. She has 6,900 tons displacement, and carries at water-line a belt of twelve inches of steel. Her length is 382 feet, and she has a speed of from nineteen to twenty knots an hour. Her heavy battery includes four nine and one-half inch Canet breech-loaders and eight four and three-quarter inch Canet heavy-firing guns. The former are in main bar-bette turrets, one forward and the other aft, and one on each side amidships. They can be loaded in any position, and while the turrets can be worked by hand, electricity is substituted for hydraulic power as a motor. The quick-firing guns, placed in pairs in four closed turrets, can be operated either by hand or electricity. In her secondary battery this vessel has eight smaller rapid-firing guns, six revolving cannon, and seven machine guns, besides four torpedo tubes. The *Captain Prat* would prove, it is believed, more than a match for any of our cruisers, but if occasion should arise, it is quite likely we would know how to take care of ourselves on sea or land. *Frank Leslie's Weekly*.

BEAUTY.

DAILY NEWS.

Is there any handsome people on the face of the globe? Now we may set aside the black and yellow and polychrome races in general, many of whom are well shaped, and like bronze statues to look upon, but who do not come up to the Aryan standard in features and colour. Leaving these children of nature out of the question, it may be confessed that there is no race among whom beauty is common. If the ancient Greeks were like their statues, then there once was a beautiful race, but it is not so certain that they did not idealise themselves a good deal. There is the more reason to guess this, as, when they have to represent a barbarian, say a Gaul or a German, or a professional prize-fighter, they make these people as handsome as themselves, though in a rougher way. There is a famous bronze statue of a boxer, who might be taken for an orator, or a poet, were it not for his heavy metal-studded gloves. Thus it may be deemed that there is a great proportion of the ideal in these statues, vases, coins, and figurines, where everyone is so graceful and goodly. Every nation has a high opinion of its own charms. The French pride themselves on small feet, and it is certain that their women walk very little, and have cunning bootmakers. The Americans write as if their women were a galaxy of loveliness; and then comes a military critic (English) who only saw three pretty women in the States, and one of them was a foreigner. There is no knowing what to believe when patriotism boasts of the local fair. Are the women of Arles really more lovely than their neighbours? Is "Auld Air" peculiar, beyond Girvan and Maybole, for the presence of bonnie lasses? Were the women of Tanagra prettier than those of Thebes? Or do they owe their reputation to the local school of artists? Are Irish complexions and Irish eyes the pardonable inventions of Hibernian patriotism? And are Lancashire witches more bewitching than they of Shropshire?

These questions can never be satisfactorily answered. Perhaps it might pay an American journal to send a Commissioner on Beauty all round the world, one who should give a comprehensive and unbiassed opinion. But it would be difficult for the world to believe in his judicial fairness, and no really scientific result could be obtained. At home, we may all look about us, and ask where beauty flourishes most. Now it may be a heresy, but we think that the scientific observer will find beauty most common among the young workwomen and shop girls, on one hand, and among "the highest circles," the oldest families, on the other. The large, highly educated, professional middle class is comparatively poor in female beauty. For example, it would be a dangerous experiment to take a Frenchman or an American to Lord's on an Eton and Harrow day if we wanted him to acknowledge our British superiority. Nor would it be safe to carry him to a private view at the Royal Academy. Why this should be so others may decide, laying the blame, perhaps, on over-study, which produces a plentiful crop of spectacles. Certainly either the *débutantes* at a drawing-room or the girls streaming out of a factory at dinner time would give a stranger a more correct idea of English beauty than a chance assemblage of the intellectual fair.

A PARSEE WEDDING.

(Cassell's Family Magazine.)

There must have been seven or eight hundred guests assembled before the bridal parties made their appearance. In the centre of the hall was a small open space round which chairs had been placed. Several venerable-looking Dasturs or priests, dressed in white, stood in readiness to take part in the ceremony, and on tables close beside them were trays of dry rice and cocoanuts, emblematic of plenty. Several brass trays holding rice, cocoanuts, *pán soparis* or spice packets, were brought in on the shoulders of servants. Suddenly, to the sounds of the "Europe" band, the bride's party and the bridegroom's entered from opposite sides of the hall simultaneously. Then there was such a crushing and pressing to the barred windows of the marriage hall to catch a glimpse of the two parties! Each party was so surrounded by friends that it was hardly possible to see much of the two most important persons. Both parties approached the space in the middle of the hall across which a white sheet was held, the bride and bridegroom taking their seats on opposite sides so that they

could not see each other. Crowds of friends trooped in, till the hall was completely full. Thirteen or fourteen hundred guests were expected, and by this time all had probably arrived.

The priests began to chant the marriage service in the ancient Zend language, which is not "understanded of the people." The bride and bridegroom were each furnished with a handful of rice, and it is matter of great excitement to see which first throws this rice at the other, when the sheet which has been held up between them is suddenly withdrawn. That one whose rice first touches the other is supposed to possess the warmer affection for the other. After the sheet was withdrawn the now married couple sat side by side, while the Dasturs, sometimes together and sometimes separately, addressed a long oration to them, still in Zend, on their duties to each other and the world at large. All the time that the oration was going on the priests held rice in their hands and threw several grains at a time over the young couple, apparently enforcing each command with a shower of rice. While the exhortation was going on the guests got up and walked about and talked, and no further heed was paid to the priests or what they said. Garlands made of jessamine buds interspersed with roses were then hung round the necks of the bride and bridegroom, till each looked as if they were wearing boas of flowers. Then little

dabs of vermilion were placed on the foreheads of the happy pair and their near relations, as an outward and visible sign of joy and gladness at the union.

The feast was the next feature of the entertainment in which everyone took the keenest interest. Long tables, with forms on each side, were placed in a building opening on to the garden. Fresh banana leaves were put at intervals on the table before the guests, each leaf measuring about two feet by one. They looked fresh and nice and made capital plates. One banana leaf serves for all the courses, which are brought round by attendants. Curries of all sorts, rice chutneys, fresh and dried fruits, sweets and cakes, were placed by the servers on each guest's till the pretty green plate was dotted over with all sorts of good things, which were apparently enjoyed indiscriminately by the guests. Thus, a mouthful of curry was followed by sweets and cakes, by chutneys, all eaten in the daintiest way with the fingers, spoons and forks not appearing at all. At the end of the meal attendants brought round a bowl and brass jar, and poured water over the fingers of each guest. Is it from the Parsees we have borrowed the custom of throwing rice at a wedding? With them it means, "May prosperity and plenty always be with you." Is there any such meaning in the comparatively modern custom that has sprung up amongst us?

REMARKABLE OPERATION.

On this page we give a picture of a remarkable operation recently performed in the Italian Hospital, Lima, on a Peruvian woman, named Gertrudis Ramos. It appears that this woman swallowed a fork, whether intentionally or not the reports of the case do not say, and an operation for its extraction was successfully performed by Dr. Azzali, an incision of 31 centimetres, corresponding to the length of the fork being made. The position of the fork is shown in the diagram of the liver (higado) and stomach (estomago).

THE AMEER AND HIS ENGLISH ENGINEER.—Mr. Pyne, the English engineer who manages the Ameer's workshops at Cabul, passed through India recently on his way home for a well-earned holiday. He is an enthusiastic admirer of Abdurrahman, and says that the peaceful industries he has been instrumental in introducing into his capital are having a wonderfully civilising influence on the turbulent Afghans. According to Mr. Pyne, the Ameer regards the Russians with intense dislike and suspicion. He learned their character during his years of exile, and told Mr. Pyne with evident relish how, by pretending to a dulness of intellect, he succeeded in leading them to betray themselves in their true light. The Ameer seems to be a wag in his

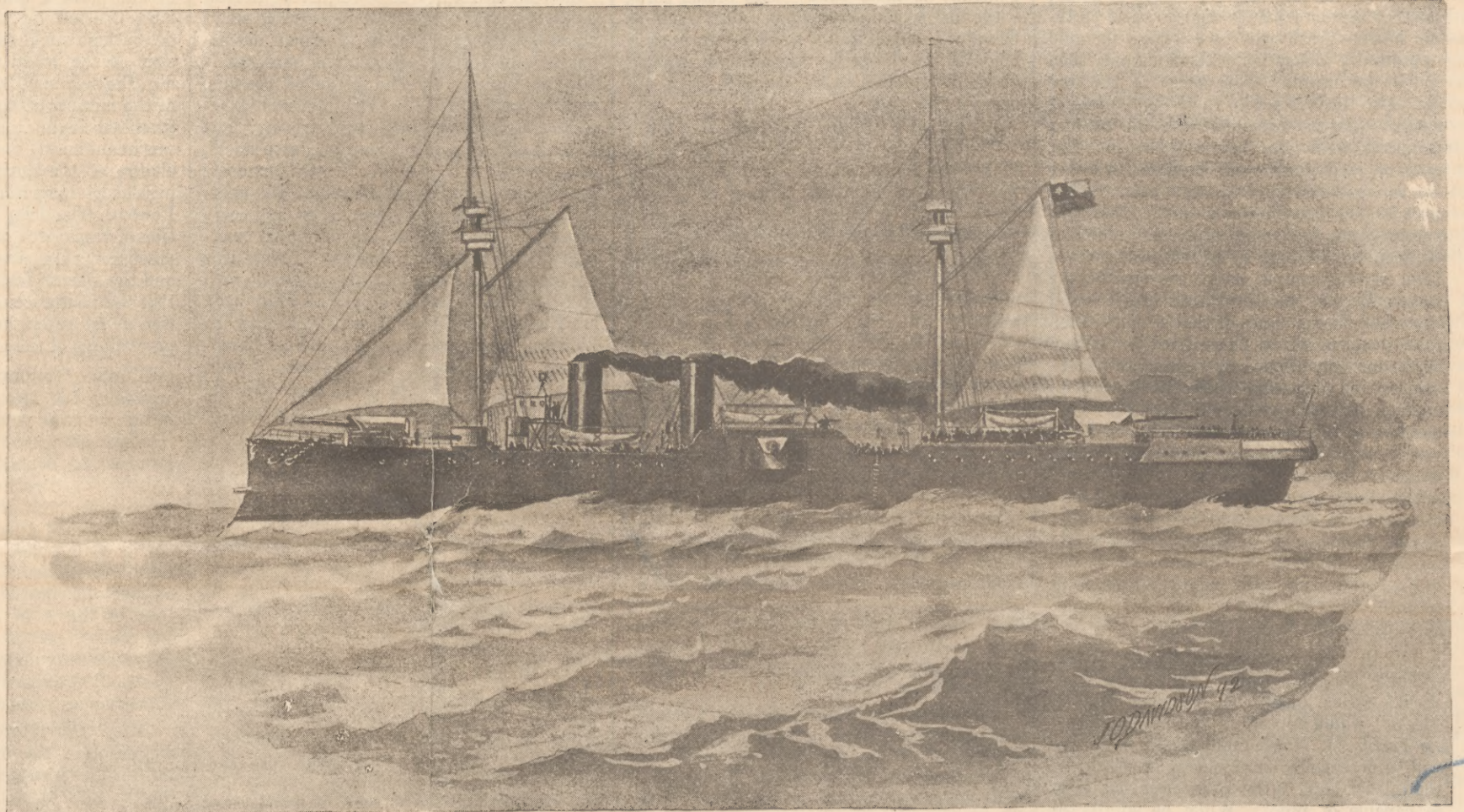
way. On one occasion he—after he had come to the throne—received a communication from the Russian Governor of Turkestan stating that it was proposed to exercise some 500 artillery and cavalry on the Afghan frontier, and expressing a hope that it would not give rise to apprehensions on the part of his Highness. Abdurrahman replied that he had no objection, because, as it happened, he was about to exercise 5,000 cavalry, artillery, and infantry on his side of the frontier at the same place, and there was plenty of room for both. The hint was enough. The Russians wrote thanking the Ameer, but intimating that they had found another site for their manoeuvres.

—At Lucknow, where so many were murdered during the Sepoy Rebellion thirty years ago, 2,000 children, nearly all of Hindu-Mohammedan parentage, recently marched in a Sunday-school procession.

"ALL I can say is I would have lent you five pounds if I had been as rich as you are," asserted Hardup. "Humph!" ejaculated Dives, "possibly that is the reason why you are not as rich as I am.—"Stopper.

FOND FATHER: Ah! My boy's head will never be turned by success.—Cynical Friend: No! Well, I don't see what's to prevent it. It's certainly wooden enough to be turned with success.—Fun.

STINGING BLOWS.—Bees' whacks.—Moonshine.



THE FORMIDABLE CHILIAN IRON-CLAD, "CAPTAIN PRAT," NOW FITTING OUT IN FRANCE.



GERTRUDIS RAMOS

The Peruvian woman who was operated upon in the Italian hospital, Lima, for the extraction from her stomach of a fork she had swallowed.